

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

August 25th, 2020

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday August 25th, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Leslie Mayer, Jen Rothenberg, Shirley Canniff, Phil Lasker, Scott Walker, and associate members, Sarah Carrier and Scott Lever were present. Recreation Director Joe Connelly and Program Supervisor Zachary Vaillette were also in attendance.

Anticipated Speakers: Emily Sullivan and Betsy Leondar-Wright

Members of the Public: Eric Love, Richard Piazza, Anne Clark, Nancy Morrison, Julia Matthews, Josh Fenollosa, Alan Jones, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Julia McLaughlin, Erin Fera, Henry Fenollosa, Hera Vlamakis, Joy Ahern, Julia Matthews, Kristen Faiola, Laura Pierce, Lily Chung, Lindsay Keach Bronstein, Nancy Morrison, Paula O'Shaughnessy, Susan Stein, Tycho Nightingale, Varsha (last name not provided), Evelyn Ginsparg, Andrew Larke, and Laura Pierce

Preliminary Matter: Leslie Mayer, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance via a roll call. Ms. Mayer read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Ms. Mayer.

Open Forum – Public Comment

N/A

Friends of Spy Pond Scavenger Hunt Request – Betsy Leondar-Wright

Ms. Mayer stated that the Commission received the reworked proposal for the Friends of Spy Pond Scavenger Hunt event. This proposed event was previously discussed at the last Commission meeting and recommendations were made. Karen Grossman spoke on this previously and it was anticipated that Betsy Leondar-Wright would be present on the Zoom call. However, Ms. Leondar-Wright was not present when the Commission discussed this topic.

Ms. Mayer stated that the reworked proposal outlines the proposed scavenger hunt as more of an art hunt now and will not feature prizes as previously planned. The Friends of Spy Pond will now be using QR Codes for the clues, which will make the entire event "touchless". Participants will also have the option to print out clues and locations from home. Ms. Mayer believes the Commission's previous advice was well received and the group is proposing a good plan. Ms. Canniff stated that she was happy to see the adjustments made. Ms. Rothenberg had no comment. Mr. Walker asked if the Commission needed to vote on this event request or if just a vote of support was needed. Mr. Connelly stated that he proposed this to the Commission to make them aware of the event. He is only looking for a vote of support. No official vote is needed to approve this request. Mr. Lasker and Mr. Lever also had no comment on this matter. Ms. Rothenberg made the motion for a vote of support for the Friends of Spy Pond Scavenger Hunt Request. Ms. Canniff seconded this motion. Ms. Mayer asked for a roll call which all (5) Commissioners responded yes to, approving the vote of support (5-0).

Afterschool Programs, Day Cares, Pre-School Programs, Arlington Public School Park Use Requests

Mr. Connelly gave an update to the Commission on the previously discussed topic of local afterschool, day care, and preschool programs requesting to use Town parks/playgrounds for their programs. It was noted that the main concern discussed last meeting was that if permits were issued, these spaces and playgrounds would not be available to members of the public during these times.

As requested, Mr. Connelly spoke with Todd Morse, Director of the Arlington After-School Programs, regarding the proposals for each individual location requested. Mr. Connelly believes that it is likely that they will be able to work this out in terms of finding a section of field space and a specific time frame on playgrounds that can be designated for use by the afterschool programs. Mr. Connelly also stated that several Arlington Public Schools are looking into

the possibility of placing tents on PRC property. Mr. Connelly continued that he received a request from Brackett School to place a tent on the field located outside of the school. Being proactive, Mr. Connelly reached out to APS Superintendent, Dr. Kathleen Bodie, asking if it was possible for all schools interested in placing tents on fields to submit requests to allow review of all requests at the same time. However, no other school tent requests were received at this time.

Mr. Connelly noted that, if approved, there is a possibility of having conflicts with high school sports teams using the fields. For fall 2020, field users include youth organizations and local high school teams. Mr. Connelly outlined the MIAA's plans regarding sports during the upcoming school year. Currently, the governing body plans to have (4) different sport seasons, which is different from the traditional (3) seasons. Games for high school football will begin in the winter rather than the fall. Mr. Connelly noted the biggest change with the MIAA's plan is that sports will be allowed to practice as a team outside of their designated playing season. Local high school athletic directors are still working on figuring out exact schedules. Mr. Connelly has a rough outline and does not believe there will be any issues if the field space/playground requests are approved for these programs. With this, Mr. Connelly stated that he would like to move forward with issuing permits for only the afterschool requests at this time. Permitting for this would be similar to what is currently occurring for the Business in the Parks program. He stated that he would be reviewing/approving the day care and pre-school permits all at the same time once they have all been received. Mr. Connelly is looking for a vote of support from the Commission before moving forward with these approvals.

Ms. Canniff stated that she will be excluding herself from this discussion and all matters related to this topic due to her personal interests/position. Ms. Rothenberg asked if all afterschool programs in Town had been contacted about the possibility of using Recreation Department spaces for their programs. Mr. Connelly stated that they had been. Ms. Rothenberg also asked if requests were specific to just field or playgrounds. Mr. Connelly confirmed that is was for both and stated that decisions regarding requests need to be made based on logistics for each specific location. Spaces located at or in close proximity to a school would be reviewed/permitted differently so there is time for the public to use parks and playgrounds directly afterschool.

It was confirmed that the current plan has school dismissal at 2:30pm on days of in person learning. Ms. Rothenberg asked for it to be on the record that she believes the Commission should not permit any playgrounds for sole use until 3:30-4:00pm. Approving a program to have the sole use of Town playground directly after school dismissal would be unfair to families and children not enrolled in the program. Ms. Rothenberg also asked why a request was not submitted on behalf of the Dallin Afterschool Program. Ms. Canniff stated that the program located there has been using the playground for decades and felt there was no need to submit a sole use request. The program is aware of the high usage times and plans around these in terms of their use. They plan to continue using the playground in the same manner they have in previous years.

Ms. Rothenberg questioned if the Hardy School playground had been requested. It was stated that the playground at Hardy is located on APS property and not PRC property. The playgrounds located at the Thompson and Bishop Schools were the only PRC requests received. Ms. Rothenberg questioned why the Brackett Afterschool Program did not need a permit in previous years to use the Robbins Farm Playground. Mr. Connelly stated that since it is a public playground, there was no need for a permit. He then clarified that the permits being requested for this school year are programs looking for permission to have a designated timeframe of sole use (no other groups or members of the public on playground during allotted timeframe). Mr. Walker, Mr. Lasker, and Ms. Mayer all had no comment on this matter.

Ms. Mayer asked Mr. Connelly if is looking for a vote of support from the Commission, which was confirmed. Mr. Connelly stated that this will be discussed in further detail with Commission Members closer to the start of school. There will also be a designated review period for these requests.

Ms. Rothenberg made the motion for a vote supporting the issuance of local afterschool, day care, and preschool programs permits for sole usage of PRC fields/playgrounds during a specific timeframe. Mr. Walker seconded this

motion. Ms. Mayer asked for a roll call which all (4) Commissioners responded yes to, approving the vote of support (4-0-1) at 7:41pm. Ms. Canniff abstained.

Arlington-Belmont Crew Annual Permit Request

Ms. Mayer stated that, as in the past, the Arlington-Belmont Crew Club is looking to use Spy Pond as their primary location. Mr. Connelly noted that he asked the group to put in an official permit request to have the request/permission documented. This was also done as all groups submitting permit requests are required to also submit a COVID Safety Plan specific to their program. Mr. Connelly stated that A-B Crew has submitted their COVID Safety Plan, which has been reviewed and approved by the Arlington Board of Health. Ms. Rothenberg had no comment. Mr. Walker asked for clarification on what location specifically was being permitted. Mr. Connelly stated that the area permitted is the storage area and a portion of the parking lot. Ms. Rothenberg asked if their permit request included Spy Pond Field. Mr. Connelly stated that it would most likely include Scannell Field and this would be viewed as a normal permit request. Mr. Lasker asked about the time frame of the permit. It was stated that the time frame was from 3:00pm-6:00pm. Mr. Lever had no comment on this matter. No approval vote was needed from the Commission on this matter.

Correspondence Received: Mountain Biking, Tennis Court Hours (Kelleher)

Mountain Biking

Ms. Mayer stated that, since many members of the public attending the meeting have interest in this topic, the matter would be taken up first on the agenda. The Commission addressed this item first at the start of this meeting. Mr. Connelly stated that he received a great deal of feedback via email, both positive and negative, and wanted to clarify the focus of the Mountain Biking Task Group. This group is looking into the feasibility of mountain biking trails in Arlington and if so, where. Mr. Connelly stated that all correspondence received is being reviewed and has been forwarded to the group and full Commission. There is a high volume of emails and the Commission has been forwarded everything received as of Friday of last week.

Mr. Connelly reviewed the origin of the Mountain Biking Task Group, as a group formed after a young resident reached out with the idea of having official mountain biking trails in the Crusher Lot. This individual the idea to the Commission and presented himself well. He noted that this group is looking to the feasibility of having mountain biking at any location in Town and not just specifically at the Crusher Lot and that this group has only had one meeting so far.

Mr. Connelly then stated that notices have been posted at the Crusher Lot property and by other means that unauthorized trail building is prohibited. However, it should be noted that mountain biking itself is allowed at Town properties. Mr. Connelly stated that he wanted to make it clear that no decision has been made regarding a location for any formal mountain biking trails in Town and/or specifically in the Crusher Lot. He is asking for everyone's patience and to give the working group the opportunity to do their job to look into this. The group will be looking at mountain biking trails in surrounding communities, determining if the idea is right for Arlington and if there is a suitable location in Town.

Mr. Lasker, one of the Commission Members on the task group, spoke in support of Mr. Connelly's summary. He indicated that the group has not predetermined the outcome and that they are going to look into all possibilities and make a decision based on the information and discussions they have. Mr. Lasker stated he believes the term "mountain biking park" can be misleading. He believes that if mountain biking trails were officially created in Town, it would not be a situation where a location would be clear cut and solely used for mountain biking.

Since this idea was first suggested at the Crusher Lot, Task Group members have visited this property first. Other locations will be visited to look at feasibility, including Hills Hill and Menotomy Rocks Park. Mr. Lasker also stated the discussion of looking at other local communities with mountain biking has begun.

Mr. Connelly stated that, while the Commission has asked for no further unauthorized trail building, there have been reports of individuals putting obstructions on the previously constructed trails. The Commission stated that this should not be happening as there are concerns that individuals using the trails could get hurt.

Mr. Walker, also a Commission member on the task group, stated that he had nothing to add to Mr. Lasker's comments at this time. Mr. Walker did state that safety is their top priority and that the task group will be looking into all possible options. He looks forward to going through the process.

Ms. Mayer affirmed the statements made by Mr. Connelly and task group members. Ms. Rothenberg requested that if the task group decides that this is feasible, trails built do not take over an entire property. She believes this would help with perspective. Ms. Mayer stated that the Commission has and will continue to view properties in Town as multi-use, as they want to keep recreational options open for members of the public. Ms. Mayer thanked all members of the public for their correspondence. The Commission appreciates how much they care about this topic and understands what is being conveyed in the feedback.

Tennis Court Hours

Ms. Mayer stated that the next correspondence received was regarding tennis court hours in Arlington with Mr. Connelly confirming that this was the second request in the last month questioning tennis court hours of operation. This correspondence was specific to play at the Crosby Tennis Courts, as there are concerns about play not being allowed to begin until 9:00am on Sundays.

Mr. Connelly stated that the Recreation Office has also received many calls regarding issues occurring at Town tennis courts, including calls complaining that people using the courts are staying too long and not allowing others to play. Mr. Connelly noted that several years ago, the department piloted an app where individuals could reserve court times. This went well and during the offseason he will be looking into implementing a similar system. The hope is to create a better scheduling system for next year and to address all issues for all courts in Town, including policies for hours of usage, time limits, additional court rules and signage.

Ms. Rothenberg noted that the current email is requesting an earlier start time for tennis, while the last email received was that the individual did not want the start time to be before 9:00am. Ms. Rothenberg also stated that she has been made aware of a private instructor that has been using the court for lessons. This individual is on the courts at 7:30am on Sundays hosting private tennis lessons for several hours. This person has been verbally abusive and complaints have been made regarding this. Ms. Rothenberg added that there is signage at Crosby stating that the Sunday start time is 9:00am. She asked about this signage and when it was placed, as she does not remember the topic of usage hours being voted on previously by the Commission. With this, she believes the current sign should be taken down. Ms. Rothenberg believes that hours of play need to be universal for all courts in Town.

Ms. Mayer said that the sign also outlines court rules in addition to usage hours. She was surprised to see the sign there and believes the Commission needs to review signage for all courts in Town. Ms. Rothenberg volunteered to visit each court and take pictures of the current signage. She is advocating for tennis to begin before 9:00 am, as morning hours are cooler and is advocating for new universal signage. Times and information should be the same everywhere. Ms. Mayer stated that, while Ms. Rothenberg gathers current signage information, she will be look into if the current signage was approved by the Commission in previous years.

Mr. Lever stated that the neighborhoods where courts are located in Town are in different proximities to neighbors and believes that this needs to be taken into account when discussing court usage times. Ms. Rothenberg stated the Grove St. Courts are very close to the nearby apartments. Mr. Connelly stated that some residents are for earlier start time and some are against it. Mr. Connelly believes that there needs to be a uniform policy for all locations. Ms. Rothenberg stated that interest in the sport of tennis has been growing as of late and likes the idea of using an application to book court times. She stated that there needs to be more information provided/enforcement regarding the "on the hour" rule.

Ms. Mayer stated that the coach using the courts for private lessons is a problem. Unauthorized usage for profit is against Town by-laws and needs to be addressed. Ms. Rothenberg stated that police had to be called since he was so aggressive with someone. Mr. Connelly stated that unauthorized use for lessons is a problem and it's happening at all locations in Town. Mr. Connelly also believes there needs to be more information regarding the "on the hour" start time/limit rule. This could be through using better language or even having a different process. Mr.

Lever stated that he grew up playing tennis in Town and this was an issue 40 years ago and is still an issue. Mr. Connelly and the Commission will be looking further into this matter.

Wellington Park Design Review – Emily Sullivan

Emily Sullivan of Conservation/Planning Dept. was present to speak on the Wellington Park design. Ms. Sullivan stated that she is working with retired former PRC Member, Don Vitters, on this. Documents on the latest Wellington design were forwarded to current Commission Members. These documents focused on the mix uses of the property and vegetation. Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Connelly, and representatives from DPW met on site to review the proposed planting plan. Wellington Park is currently subcontracted for upkeep and maintenance, and DPW does not believe there will be any issues with the maintenance of the plantings as planned. It was stated that mowing would occur less frequently than the normal lawn area. Ms. Sullivan stated the Commissioners previously had questions regarding the upkeep and maintenance of the vegetation that is planned to be placed around the boulder and log features. This vegetation would be maintained through weed whacking and DPW representatives do not see any issues with this as well. Once this design is implemented, there will be a walk through with the Town's subcontractor to cover this maintenance plan.

Ms. Mayer brought up the planned “exploration area” that will feature log structures. She asked to have it on record that this is not considered a playground. Mr. Connelly stated the walk through gave him a better idea of what this area will look like. The planned structures will be less than 17 inches high and are not considered play structures by code. This height requires no rubber or safety surfacing. Permits will be submitted once received. The bio retention area will be similar to the one located at Spy Pond, but will not be as steep.

Ms. Mayer asked if there was any update regarding the repair work that needed to occur for the climbing structure on the property. Ms. Sullivan stated that she has been working with representatives from Arlington High School on this. The current plan is to reinstall the guy wire in question next spring once work on the current site project is completed. This timeline works with the school's schedule and will not impact plantings. Ms. Sullivan stated that it was previously believed that one of structural poles needed to be moved and reinstalled, but this is not the case. The contractor that did the original installation will be paying the costs for this work. Ms. Rothenberg thanked Ms. Sullivan, as this has been a very challenging project involving numerous parties. Ms. Rothenberg asked about what the life span and maintenance plan would be for the planned grass area. More information will come on this and the contractor will cover any costs for the grass area if impacted by the work being completed. Mr. Connelly asked that irrigation be included in the cost estimate for this phase as an add alt, as having this information will be useful in the future. Ms. Sullivan stated the current contractor would need to hire a subcontractor in order to get an accurate cost estimate but the current contractor may be able to give a rough estimate on an irrigation system cost. Mr. Connelly and Ms. Sullivan will discuss this further. Ms. Canniff, Mr. Lasker, Mr. Walker, and Mr. Lever all had no comment on this topic. They thanked Ms. Sullivan for her work on the project so far.

Ms. Mayer stated that the Commission previously gave a vote of confidence on the project plan and asked if Ms. Sullivan is now looking for an official Commission vote on this in order to move forward, which Ms. Sullivan confirmed. Ms. Rothenberg stated that she is concerned about moving forward as they don't have an official cost estimate. Ms. Sullivan stated they have a draft \$335k cost estimate from June that includes vegetation and a water filling station. She noted that the cost of the water filling station is high and may be removed from the current cost estimate. Ms. Sullivan stated that if the Commission is uncomfortable voting at this time then she can present the full cost estimate in September. Ms. Mayer stated said that voting on project designs with only estimated cost estimates is common and that adjustments may be made once the full cost estimate and bids come in with the expectation that this information be brought to the Commission once available. Ms. Mayer believes that this matter can be voted on tonight. Ms. Rothenberg stated that she is just concerned that the exploration area may be lost subsequent to any approval.

Ms. Rothenberg made the motion to approve on the current design for the Wellington Park project with the condition all information and changes moving forward be brought forward to the Commission/Mr. Vitters. Ms. Sullivan confirmed that this would occur. This motion was seconded by Ms. Caniff. Mr. Lasker asked before the Commission votes, for Ms. Sullivan to outline the entire timeline for the project. She stated that the permitting

phase will take place from Mid-September to October. Once a bid is awarded, construction will begin during the winter and be completed sometime during the spring of 2021. Ms. Sullivan stated although she is a part of Conservation, she cannot predict how the Arlington Conservation Committee will act on the proposal and permitting.

Ms. Mayer asked for a roll call which all (5) Commissioners responded yes to approve the Wellington Park Project design with the conditions as outlined above. Ms. Mayer again thanked Ms. Sullivan for all her work and is looking forward to hearing about the project moving forward. Ms. Mayer also asked that Ms. Sullivan come back to PRC if any amendments are made to the plan by the Conservation Commission.

Capital Project Updates

- *Lussiano Playground*

Mr. Connelly gave an update on the Lussiano Playground Project. He stated that the preliminary punch list meeting will occur tomorrow and fully trained personal will also begin tree work. Mr. Connelly has requested the Town's Tree Warden attend to ensure that all trees are correctly installed. Mr. Connelly stated that the rubber safety surfacing will be arriving next week. They are still waiting for one piece of equipment to arrive, which should be delivered in September. Mr. Connelly believes the new playground will be open within the next several weeks. Ms. Mayer asked if there was any plan in place for tree watering. Ms. Rothenberg asked if bags were on site. Mr. Connelly confirmed stating the contractor has everything in place onsite. Mr. Lasker stated that taking care of trees was big topic of conservation previously and that everyone should be looped in. Mr. Connelly stated community members have been looped in and already have keys to the water spigot.

- *Arlington Reservoir Phase 1 and 2*

All Commissioners (except Ms. Rothenberg), Recreation staff, and representatives from KZLA met onsite at the Reservoir for a site walk through. Mr. Connelly believes this was important and went well. KZLA will be coming back to the Commission with recommendations discussed onsite. The pilot path project contract is currently being amended and installation will be soon. There has been no movement regarding the electrical hook up that Jim Feeney is working on with the utilities. Ms. Mayer also noted that a major tree recently fell at the Reservoir and damaged the bridge railing on the far side spillway, but no structural damage appears to have occurred. Ms. Mayer stated the DPW did a great job responding to this and removing the tree in a timely manner as the path was not passible over the weekend.

- *FY22 Capital Request*

Mr. Connelly began the discussion regarding FY22 Capital Project Requests. He stated that the Town's Capital Requests are due on Friday and noted that he recently went through the process of asking all Commissioners their priorities for capital projects. Each Commissioner gave recommendations for projects based on a priority for (1) playground, (1) field, and (1) other location. Based on the responses received, the top recommendations were sent out in the imeeting packet, which also included the top (4) playground project recommendations made by the Playground Task Group - Spy Pond, Menotomy Rocks Park, Poet's Corner, and Robbins Farm Park.

Mr. Connelly stated that a formal decision for the FY22 recommendations was needed. From Mr. Connelly's perspective and Nancy White's Playground Report, these locations were identified as rebuilds or hazard one locations. Spy Pond Playground has the oldest equipment and has passed its recommended useful life. Robbins Farm Playground has also passed its useful life in addition to the current issue with the broken slide piece. Menotomy Rocks Park Playground has a terrain issue, specifically the root system and depth of current safety surfacing. Mr. Connelly stated that if a new playground is built at Menotomy, an alternative location should be considered. As for the Poet's Corner Playground, specific parts and features deemed unsafe have been removed by the DPW over the years. However, Poet's is the only playground in Town, other than the current Reservoir Beach Playground, that has sand as its safety

surfacing. Ms. Canniff stated that the Playground Task Group visited the sites in Town to identify (4) playgrounds that were in the toughest shape.

The Commission's top (2) field recommendation projects for FY22 were Hurd Field and Poet's Corner Field. Ms. Mayer had questions about recommending Poet's Corner playground and/or field for FY22. There are currently discussions underway with other interested parties regarding renovations to the field in this location. Mr. Connelly stated that the field at Poet's is in need of work in addition to the playground. The current field is a 50-70 baseball diamond and the outfield has major drainage issues, as it is an old land fill. There is also a need for a new parking lot, which has its own logistical issues. Mr. Connelly believes the current discussion involving other parties who would fundraise for a project at Poet's could potentially be a fiscal year away, if it is to occur. Mr. Connelly believes, therefore, the focus should be on Hurd Field this year. If this is the case then a capital request for Poet's Playground should also be delayed. A redesign of the Poet's Playground may not align or fit in with the potential Poet's Field project that is being discussed.

Ms. Mayer asked for Commissioners to share their thoughts on this. Ms. Canniff stated that the Poet's Playground is not in good condition and has worn out metal. Mr. Connelly stated that he does not believe it makes sense to put in money into Poet's with the current discussions and possible redesign of the overall property being discussed. Ms. Canniff stated that it is a hard decision with this project being up in the air and no real timeline established, if funding is needed. Mr. Connelly agreed. Mr. Lasker agrees with Mr. Connelly that they should not request capital funding for Poet's in FY22 and believes the Commission's effort will be better spent looking at an alternative location. Mr. Lasker also understands Ms. Canniff's concerns regarding an unknown timeline. The proximity to Florence/Dallin were also discussed. Mr. Lasker stated that his vote would be to hold off on putting in a capital request for the Poet's Corner Playground. Ms. Rothenberg also agrees to hold off on putting forward Poet's as the playground project. She stated that if there are concerns with the condition of the current structure at Poet's, then there needs to be a walk through to assess the site. If it is deemed that the playground is a major safety issue/unusable, they may need to remove parts or the entire playground for the time being. Mr. Walker was an outlier, as he had the Buzzell Field as his top choice for a field capital request. Mr. Walker is okay with the Commission moving forward with Hurd as the field request. Ms. Mayer stated that the general consensus is to focus on Hurd Field for FY22.

If this is the case, the Commission needs to discuss and make an agreed upon recommendation for a playground request. Ms. Mayer asked if Ms. Canniff was coming around regarding her original thoughts on Poet's. Ms. Canniff stated yes, but still has concerns regarding the Town's potential funding portion if the current under-discussion field project at Poet's goes through. Ms. Canniff would like to see the playground at Poet's done if the field project does go through. Ms. Mayer believes that that playground should be included in this project discussion. Ms. Canniff is okay with moving forward with Hurd as long as the playground component is included in the potential Poet's Corner Field project discussion.

Ms. Mayer discussed location of properties in Town and where work has been recently completed. With replacement of the Res playground and North Union as the the most recent projects, the Commission should look into a potential playground project not in the Arlington Heights or East Arlington areas. She believes that they should focus on Menotomy and/or Spy Pond as the top locations for requesting playground capital funding. Ms. Canniff said when these locations were discussed by the Townwide Playground Task Group, it was in terms of the playgrounds staying in their current location. If there is potential for the playground to be placed in a new location at Menotomy Rocks Park, this project will need to have a much bigger discussion. The discussion to replace a playground in its current footprint at other locations would not be as in depth. Mr. Connelly stated that his one main point with Menotomy is that they have not put money into the property as of late. The path project there was completed in 2009 and it may be time to allocate funding to this site.

Mr. Lasker believes that the discussion for a playground capital recommendation is a difficult one. From the playground assessment completed by Nancy White, there were several playgrounds identified that need of a good deal of work/replacement. Mr. Lasker believes the current location at Menotomy is nice as it is shaded and set back. With funding recently allocated to Spy Pond, Mr. Lasker is leaning towards Menotomy for the playground project. Mr. Lasker also stated going back on the field discussion, he would like to see a new artificial turf field in Arlington. He would like to look at this from the perspective that fields are currently over used and are not going to get better until something changes. Usage needs to be balanced and the addition of an artificial turf field will help improve grass field conditions.

Ms. Rothenberg recommended Menotomy Rocks Park as this playground has a lot of issues with its structure. This area has not been worked on in awhile, and she believes the playground's current location is where a new playground should be placed. Ms. Rothenberg also noted that it may be that some playgrounds may need to be removed due to their current state, location, and maintenance issues. She believes that Spy Pond is in need of work as well and also agrees with Mr. Lasker that a new artificial turf field is a need and would help improve grass field conditions.

Mr. Walker was targeting playgrounds that were in the replacement category for his suggestion. This discussion has brought him around regarding the areas of Town where work has not recently been done. Mr. Walker also believes that Menotomy is a good choice. In terms of fields, he is also interested into looking at possible location for an artificial turf field in Town. Mr. Lasker asked if there were any additional points from working group regarding playgrounds.

Ms. Mayer stated that the assessed top two recommendations were Spy Pond and Menotomy Rocks Park. Mr. Lever joined the conversation. He lives close to Menotomy Rocks Park and his kids played there frequently when growing up. He is aware of the conditions there. However, he believes that they should invest in Spy Pond first. The playground there gets a lot more usage than Menotomy. Mr. Lever believes it would be a significant challenge to move the location of playground at Menotomy. Communication with the community about this idea would be significant and that there would be a lot of public processes that would need to occur. Mr. Lever believes they should push back a capital recommendation for the Menotomy Rocks Park playground until next year.

Ms. Mayer recently visited locations in Town to see usage, and Spy Pond was very busy. Mr. Lever added that the Spy Pond location is flexible and convenient being right off the bike path. Ms. Mayer likes the idea of moving forward with Spy Pond for this capital request. This will allow the Commission to discuss possible alternative locations for a playground at Menotomy Rocks Park if they decide to move forward with this project in the future.

Ms. Canniff stated the task group also discussed usage. Spy Pond is used by younger families' with preschoolers. Older children tend to congregate near the pond. Ms. Canniff believes the playground at Menotomy is a destination for exploring and used by an older age group. Replacing the playground at Spy Pond would be a smoother project, especially with the work on the current project taking place at the Reservoir. Menotomy Rocks Park could be a bigger project that the can be done in the future.

Mr. Connelly stated they have (26) parks and playground in Town, which are all at various levels of need. The playgrounds at Spy Pond and Menotomy Rocks Park are basically at the same level, and Mr. Connelly agrees that a Spy Pond project would be easier. Ms. Mayer stated that she would be in favor of putting forward Spy Pond for the playground FY22 request, and once the Reservoir Beach construction begins, PRC can start a feasibility discussion for Menotomy for the following year. Mr. Connelly stated that he has drafted an RFP for landscape architects to create a list of projects by priority over next 5 years.

Ms. Mayer asked what the suggestion for the third capital request should be. Mr. Connelly believes the recommendation should be for funding to replace the entire slide at Robbins Farm. Mr. Connelly is concerned that no more replacement parts are being made. They have one piece to replace the current issue but once another part breaks, a lot of work will need to be done. They will most likely have to

remove the entire slide there if this is to occur. Commissioners discussed this and base on the potential of another part breaking, the Robbins Farm Slide will be the third capital request.

Mr. Connelly confirmed based on this discussion and the Commissioner's recommendations that the FY22 Capital Requests he would be submitting will be for Hurd Field, the Spy Pond Playground, and Robbins Farm Slide. The Commission was in agreement with this.

Task Group Updates

- *Town Wide Playground*
Update provided. Please see above.
- *Reservoir Playground*
The Res Playground Task Group has looked into the specifics of the new playground as part of the Reservoir Beach Project. Ms. Mayer stated that a location has been selected at the Reservoir for the new playground. KZLA is proposing a design that may have a ship or boat themed structure incorporated in it.
- *Mountain Biking*
Updated provided. Please see above.

Summer Programming & Rink Updates

Mr. Vaillette gave an update on the department's summer programming. The Summer on Summer Street program is currently in its 5th Week. This week was added and will be the final week of the program. Things have gone very smoothly this summer. The department is also currently operating a hockey program and Viking Flag-Football this week.

Mr. Connelly provided a rink update. In addition to the current program, Greg Carter ran programs there as a rental the previous (2) weeks. The rink schedule for this year has been updated and will be have daily users beginning September 1st. Mr. Connelly is current working with the Board of Health on protocols for the rink programs and users. Public skating this year will require pre-registration and is limited to (25) people. The rink is currently operating at 80% capacity required by the COVID-19 protocols.

Approval of Minutes – August 11th, 2020

Ms. Mayer brought up approval of meeting minutes for the Commission's Meeting on August 11th. Commissioners had no edits or changes that needed to be made for the August 11th Minutes.

Ms. Mayer noted that there was correspondence received regarding the July 14th meeting. It was requested that the following items be noted:

July 14th Meeting Minutes

- Alan Jones is an abutter to an abutter of the Crusher Lot Property. He is not a direct abutter as indicated in the minutes.
- Information regarding a mountain biking survey was misstated. What was presented to the Commission was not a survey but rather a petition on change.org. It was also noted that this petition was completed by both Arlington residents and non-residents.

Ms. Rothenberg then made the motion to approve the Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes for August 11, 2020. Ms. Canniff seconded this motion. Ms. Mayer asked for a roll call which all (5) Commissioners responded yes to, approving the minutes (5-0).

Comments and Items For Future Meetings

- Block Scheduling
- Laurie Bogdan and Kimberly Harding Art in Park Request

Additional

- Tennis Court Usage and Signage
- Use of Town Parks and Playgrounds by After School Programs

Other

Ms. Mayer formally introduced Scott Lever as an associate member. Mr. Lever is happy to be a member and introduced himself, stating that he grew up in Arlington. After moving away, he moved back to Town with his family. He stated that he is a Town Meeting Member for precinct 8 and is involved in other Town committees. Mr. Lever has a PHD in Organizational Psychology. He enjoys being a part of groups, being outdoors, and sports like sailing.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Mr. Lasker. Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by Commissioners, 5-0, at 9:05pm.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Program Supervisor, Zachary Vaillette.